685

THE NEW AGE

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24 JAN 1940
MADRAS

EDITOR: H.D.RAJAH.

JULY 1936.
Vol. III. No. 2.

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VOL. III JULY 1936 NO. 2

ELEMENTS OF BONAPARTISM IN THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Leon Trotsky, the famous historian has something to say about everybody of the Russian Revolution. Read what he has to say about Kerensky :—

A good deal has been written to the effect that subsequent misfortunes, including the advent of the Bolsheviks, might have been avoided if instead of Kerensky a man of clear head and strong character had stood at the helm of the government. It is indubitable that Kerensky possessed neither of these attributes. But the question is, why did certain well defined social classes find themselves obliged to lift up just this man, Kerensky, upon their shoulders?

As though to freshen our historic memory, events in Spain are now again showing us how a revolution, washing away the customary political boundary lines, surrounds everybody and everything during its first days with a rosy mist. At this stage even its enemies try to tint themselves with its colour. This mimicry expresses a semi-instinctive desire of the conservative classes to accommodate themselves to the changes impending, so as to suffer from them as little as possible. This solidarity of the nation, founded upon loose phrases, makes of compromisism an indispensable political function. Petty bourgeois idealists, over-looking class distinctions, thinking in stereotyped phrases, not knowing what they want, and wishing well to everybody, are at this stage the sole conceivable leaders of the majority. If Kerensky had possessed clear thoughts and a strong will, he would have been completely unfit for his historic role. This is not a retrospective estimate. The Bolsheviks so judged the matter in the heat of the events. "An attorney for the defence in political cases, a Social Revolutionary who became leader of the Trudoviks, a radical without any social schooling whatever, Kerensky has expressed more completely than anyone else the first epoch of the revolution, its "national" formlessness, the idealism of its hopes and expectations": thus wrote the author of these lines while locked up in Kerensky's prison after the July Days. "Kerensky made speeches about land and freedom, about law and order, about peace among nations, about the defence of the fatherland, the heroism of Liebknecht, about how the Russian revolution ought to astonish the world with its magnanimity-waving the while a little red silk handkerchief. The everyday man who was just beginning to wake up politically listened to these speeches with rapture:

it seemed to him that he himself was speaking from the tribune. The army greeted Kerensky as their saviour from Guchkov. The liberals were won by the extreme moderateness of idea under his formless radicalism of phrase" The peasants heard about him as a Trudovid, as a muzhik's deputy.

But the period of universal and indiscriminate embraces does not last long. The class struggle dies down at the beginning of a revolution only to come to life afterward in the form of civil war. In the Fairy-like rise of compromisism is contained the seed of its inevitable fall. The official French journalist, Claude Anet, explained Kerensky's swift loss of popularity by a lack of tact, which impelled the socialist politician to actions "little harmonising" with his role. "He frequents the imperial lodges, he lives in the Winter Palace or at Tsarskoe Selo, he sleeps in the bed of Russian emperors. A little too much vanity and vanity a little too noticeable that is shocking in a country which is the simplest in the world." Tact implies, in the small as well as the great, an understanding. Kerensky had not a trace. Lifted up by the trustful masses, he was completely alien to them, did not understand, and was not the least interested in the question of how the revolution looked to them and what inferences they were drawing from it. The masses expected bold action from him, but he demanded from the masses that they should not interfere with his magnanimity and eloquence.

Once when Kerensky was paying a theatrical visit to the arrested family of the Czar, the soldiers on duty around the palace said to their commandant: "We sleep on boards, We have bad food, but Nicholashka even after he is arrested has meat to throw in the pail." Those were not "magnanimous" words, but they expressed what the soldiers were feeling.

Breaking free of their age-old chains, the people were transgressing at every step those boundaries which educated leaders wanted to lay down for them. Towards the end of April Kerensky voiced a lament upon this subjects: "Can it be that the Russian Free State is a state of slaves in revolt ?... I regret that I did not die two months ago. I should, have died with the great dream," etc. with this bad rheto ric he hoped to exert an influence on the workers, soldiers, sailors, and peasants. Admiral Kolchalk related subsequently before a soviet tribunal how in May the radical War Minister made the rounds of the black Sea Fleet in order to reconcile the sailors with their officers. It seemed to the orator after each speech that the goal had been attained: "There, you see, admiral, everything is fixed..." But nothing at all was fixed. This disintegration of the fleet was only beginning.

As time went on Kerensky's affectations, insolence, and braggadocio more and more keenly offended the masses. During his journey around the front he once cried out irascibly to his adjutant in the railroad car—perhaps on purpose to be heard by a general: "Kick all those damned committees to hell." Arriving on a visit to the Baltic Fleet, Kerensky ordered the Sailors" Central Committee, to appear before him on the admiral's warship. The Centrobalt, being a soviet body, was not under the war ministry and considered the order offensive. The president of the Committee, the sailor Dybenko, answered: "If Kerensky wants to talk to the Centrobalt, let him come to us." Was not that an intolerable act of impudence! On the vessels where Kerensky did enter into conversation with the sailors, it went no better—especially on the warship 'Republic' whose mood was Bolshevik. Why had he voted for war in the state Duma? Why had he put his signature to the imperialist note of Miliukov on the 21st of April? Why had he given the czarist senators a pension of six thousand roubles a year? Kerensky

refused to answer these "Crafty" questions put to him by "foes." The crew dryly declared the minister's explanations "unsatisfactory." In a silence like the tomb Kerensky withdrew from the ship. "Slaves in revolt!" muttered the radical lawyer, grinding his teeth. But the sailors were experiencing an emotion of pride: "Yes, we were slaves and we have revolted."

Kerensky's high-handed treatment of democratic social opinion called out at every step semi-conflicts with the soviet leaders, who were travelling the same road but with more of a disposition to look round at the masses. Already on the 8th of March, the Executive Committee, frightened by protests from below, had warned Kerensky of the impossibility of liberating arrested policemen. A few days later the Compromisers found themselves obliged to protest against the plan of the Minister of justice to export the czar's family to England. Again in two or three weeks, the Executive Committee raised the general question of a "Regulation of their relations" with Kerensky, but those relations never were and never could be regulated. The same difficulties arose about his party relations. At a social Revolutionary congress early in June, Kerensky was voted down in the elections to the party central committee, receiving 135 votes out of 270. And how the leaders did squirm in their effort to explain, both to right and left, that "many did not vote for Comrade Kerensky because he is already overloaded with work." The fact is that, while the staff and departmental Social Revolutionaries adored Kerensky as the source of all good things, the old social Revolutionaries bound up with the masses regarded him without confidence and without respect. But neither the Executive Committee nor the Social Revolutionary Party could get along without Kerensky: He was necessary to them as the connecting link of the Coalition.

In the Soviet bloc the leading role belonged to the Mensheviks. They invented the decisions, but in the state apparatus the Narodniks clearly outbalanced the Mensheviks—a fact which was most obviously expressed in the dominating position of Kerensky. Half Kadet and half Social Revolutionary, Kerensky was not a representative of the soviets in the Government, like Tseretelli or Chernov, but a living tie between the bourgeoisie and the democracy. Tseretelli and Chernov formed one side of the Coalition. Kerensky was a personal incarnation of the Coalition itself Tseretelli complained of the predominance in Kerensky of "personal motives," not understanding that these were inseparable from his political function. Tseretelli himself as Minister of the Interior issued a circular to the effect that the commissars of the provinces ought to rely upon all the "living forces" of their locality that, is upon the bourgeoisie and upon the soviets—and carry out the policies of the Provisional Government without surrendering to "party influences." That ideal commissar, rising above all hostile classes and parties in order to find his whole duty in himself and in a circular—that is Kerensky on a provincial or a county scale. As a crown to this system there was needed one independent all-Russian commissar in the Winter Palace. Without Kerensky, compromisism would have been like a church steeple without a cross.

The history of Kerensky's rise is full of lessons. He became Minister of Justice thanks to the February revolution which he feared. The April demonstration of "slaves in revolt" made him Minister of War and Marine. The July struggle, caused by "German agents," put him at the head of the Government. At the beginning of September a movement of the masses will make this head of the Government supreme commander-in-chief as well. The dialectic of the compromise regime, and

its malicious irony, lie in the fact that the masses had to lift Kerensky to the very highest height before they could topple him over.

While contemptuously drawing away his skirts from the people who had given him power, Kerensky more thirstily grabbed after any sign of encouragement from educated society. In the very first days of the revolution the leader of the Moscow Kadets, Doctor Kishkin, said, upon returning from Petrograd : "If it were not for Kerensky, we should not have what we have. His name will be written in golden letters on the tablets of history." The praise of these liberals became one of the most important political criteria for Kerensky, but he could not, and did not wish to, lay his popularity in a simple way at the feet of the bourgeoisie. On the contrary, he more and more acquired a taste for seeing all classes at his own feet. "The thought of setting off and balancing against each other the government of the bourgeoisie and the democracy," testifies Miliukov, "was not foreign to Kerensky from the very beginning of the revolution." This course was the natural outcome of his whole life's journey, which had run between the functions of liberal lawyer and the underground circles. While respectfully assuring Buchanan that "the Soviet will die a natural death, "Kerensky was frightening his bourgeois collegues at every step with the wrath of the Soviet. And on those frequent occasions when the leaders of the Executive Committee disagreed with Kerensky, he dismayed them by mentioning the most horrible of catastrophes, the resignation of the liberals.

When Kerensky reiterated that he did not wish to be the Marat of the Russian revolution, that meant that he would refuse to take severe measures against the reaction, but not so against "anarchy." Generally speaking, by the way, that is the moral of the opponents of violence in politics : they renounce violence when it comes to introducing changes in what already exists, but in defence of the existing order they will not stop at the most ruthless acts.

In the period of preparation for the offensive, Kerensky became especially the beloved figure of the possessing classes. Tereshchenko kept telling each and everybody how highly our Allies esteem "The labours of Kerensky." The Kadet paper, Rech, while severe with the Compromisers, continually emphasised its favourable attitude to the War Minister. Rodziankoh himself recognised that "this young man... is reborn each day with redoubled strength for creative labour and the welfare of the fatherland." With such remarks, the liberals were, of course, deliberately flattering Kerensky, but also they could not help seeing that in the essence he was working for them. "Imagine how it would have been, remarked Lenin, "if Guchkov had attempted to issue orders for an offensive, to disband regiments, to arrest soldiers, to forbid congresses, to shout "thou" at the soldiers, to call the soldiers "cowards" etc. But Kerensky could permit himself this 'luxury' only, it is true, until he had squandered that incredibly quick-melting confidence which the people had placed to his credit."

The offensive, while elevating Kerensky's reputation in the ranks of the bourgeoisie, completely undermined his popularity with the people. The collapse of the offensive was in essence a collapse of Kerensky in both camps. But the striking thing is that exactly this two-sided loss of standing rendered him henceforth "Irreplaceable." As to the role of Kerensky in creating the second Coalition, Miliukov expresses himself thus: "the only possible man." Not, alas, "the only man needed.' This leading liberal politician, be it remarked, never took Kerensky any too seriously, and

broad circles of the bourgeoisie were more and more inclined to lay the blame on him for all the blows of fate.

"The impatience of patriotically inclined groups" impelled them, according to Miliukov, to search for a strong man. At one time Admiral Kolchak was suggested for this role. Moreover, this installing of a strong man at the helm was "thought of in different terms from those of negotiation and compromise." That we may easily believe.

"Hopes of democracy, of the will of the people of the constituent Assembly," writes Stankevich of the Kadet Party. "Were already thrown overboard. The municipal elections throughout all Russia had given an overwhelming majority to the socialists...and there were beginning to be convulsive reachings out for a power which should not persuade but only command." More accurately speaking, a power which should take the revolution by the throat.

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Nought is Art before its might
Gone is the beautiful sight.

One law in might supreme
Destroys the world's Beauty scheme.
Shorn of glory are Nature and Art
Nothing so beautiful as a good heart.

By P. C. Jayavelu.

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JAPAN'S EYE ON INDIA

In the course of his writing in his book "Britain in India" Mr. T. J. George states as follows:—

The late war has directly and indirectly influenced the racial problem in a variety of ways, morally and materially. Morally it may be said to have compromised irretrievably the European superiority till then flaunted openly and accepted as almost unquestionable by the East. The sight of the western "Christian" nations indulging in an orgy of destruction, and of a relapse to primitive barbarism, showed how flimsy and superficial civilisation, how thin and deceptive the veneer of western culture was. It was no longer possible to adopt that air of moral superiority which was quite common during the pre-war days. Besides undermining the moral superiority of the West in many ways, the war also had other profound reactions on the racial problem.

From the economic aspect the war was not without its significance. It tended to bring about a serious lowering of the standards of life, of the productive efficiency of the belligerent countries. Japan and some of the eastern countries have not been slow to take advantage of these changes. Japan had already struck a powerful nail in the coffin of western imperialism by the defeat of Russia. She had been making a determined effort to capture the Eastern markets with remarkable success. The way in which she is progressing in her commercial expansion, must give considerable alarm to the English imperialists. No doubt, it is full of ominous possibilities. Mere tariff discrimination is not going to solve the situation. For, even if the duties are raised very high against the Japanese goods, it does not make the position easier for the English. For one thing, it is not easy or possible to exclude the Japanese altogether from the Indian markets. Her prices are so incredibly low, that European countries can never hope to compete with her in that matter. Japan seems to have studied the Indian conditions well, and she seems to have directed her resources towards turning out goods at such a price as would be within the reach of Indian masses. The way in which Indian markets are flooded with Japanese goods is one of the most astonishing things of the present time. This factor has a subtle reaction on the Indian mind. India finds a self-governing country, a small nation with limited natural resources, like Japan, one of the most progressive countries in the world. She has outstripped India and all the Eastern countries in a surprisingly short time. Naturally the people in India are inclined to ask whether she also could not have done the same if she had been a self-governing country? That there are fundamental differences in the character of the people, in the size of the country, the nature of the political and social and religious problems that both are called upon to face, would be apparent to all. But all the same, the example of Japan is a challenge to her, reminding her of her helpless and inferior position in the existing conditions. Thus she is made to feel the sting and the humiliation of the whole situation more glaringly. While the example of a free country like Japan is rather humiliating to her in one way, her example has also given the inspiration in another. It is not pos-

sible to deal at length on the many different ways in which the example of Japan has affected the present condition. That the "Yellow Peril" is an ever present one among the Anglo-Saxon nations is very obvious from their foreign policy and defence measures. The hopes of India have been very much raised by the policy of Japan.

But there is another indirect result of the Japanese menace. Even granting that England succeeded in excluding Japanese goods from the Indian market, that is not going to ease her position. Under the shelter of the wall of protection Indian industries will spring up immediately, and the effect of Britain's commercial relations with India will not be materially improved. If there is good-will and mutual trust, perhaps it may be possible for the English still to retain considerable share of India's trade. But only if there is good will. But if the English people are thinking in terms of the attitude of the Editor of "Daily Mail" and of others, that India is an exclusive English preserve from where all others are to be shut out, then the prospects of retaining the friendship are rather remote, all the "self-guards" and vested interests notwithstanding. So the need to treat Indians in a more decent manner is rendered very urgent from the economic side. Perhaps this aspect is going to influence some of the English more than the other moral and humanitarian arguments. The sly movements of the Japanese Jackal in the Indian fields seem to have awakened the serious fears of the British Lion about the safety of the Indian Lamb: In this connection I cannot help recalling a very humoros remark of a certain Japanese gentleman to my sister, when she was in Japan seeing the country recently. Discussing the conditions in India this Japanese friend remarked:—"Why don't you try us for a change?"

The war has exerted a profound influence on the racial problem in a variety of subtle ways. The postwar industrial and economic changes and depression in England, the increased taxation, the keen race in armaments which has imposed a severe strain on national budgets, these and others have rendered the efforts of England to retain her pre-eminent position extremely difficult.

Even from the purely physical point of view the war was not without its disturbing reaction on this aspect of the matter. The splendid and heroic services which the Indians performed during this crisis in the different theatres of war, served to enhance their reputation. But at the same time the emergence of a new class of hybrid population, by the promiscuous mixture between the Indian and other coloured races with the women of the continental countries, particularly of France and of Belgium, which later on created a serious post-war problem for the statesmen of Europe, served to undermine the basis of superiority on which the westerners prided themselves so far. There are other indirect ways also in which the Great War has altered the whole outlook on the nature of the racial relations.

If the Great war has destroyed the moral basis of European superiority, the post-war developments have not conspired in any way to rehabilitate it. The Chaos in Central Europe, the unrelenting persecution of the Jews, the repulsive display of brute force on many occasions by the various European powers, the unprecedented slackening of the marriage ties in Europe and in America, the brutal lynchings which are not an unfamiliar feature of American life, the treatment of the Asiatics in the various parts of the British Empire, the acute and exasperating racial struggle in South Africa. these and other movements of an allied character have been in no small measure responsible for the

steady deterioration in the ascendancy of western culture in the estimation of the Indians and other Asiatics.

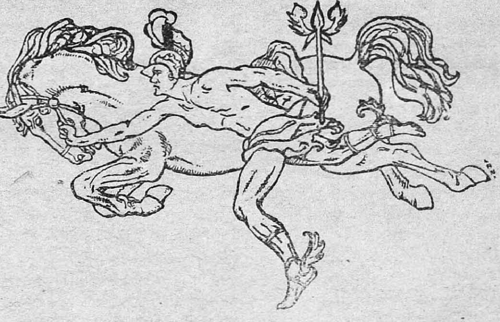
Nor has the modern cinema industry in any way helped to restore the general tone of European eminence. While the "movie" and "talkie" corporations have been, till now, declaring enormous profiits, from one aspect they have been bartering away Western position for a "mess of pottage." In spite of the rigorous censorship that is said to exist in the cinema world, one can venture to state the opinion, that the general impression created in the minds of the "Asiatic" audience by these films, has been extremely prejudicial to Western moral supremacy. It is unnecessary to dilate on this obvious point.

Thus the general trend of these post-war tendency and developments in the world—economic, political and cultural—has been to shatter the comfortable and complacent, and the hitherto powerful and unquestioned, dogma of western superiority. The chances of recovering the lost ground appear very precarious. Nevertheless the glorious company of Conservative apostles and martyrs, and the gallant and devoted band of militant "Die-hards," and the vociferous crew of Jingoists, continue in their incurable obsession about the success of their policy based on ethnic, political, and cultural pre-eminence. With a mad race in armaments, which all the "Disarmament Conferences" have not succeeded in eliminating, with increased taxation and dislocated industry, it is rather hard to imagine how England could succeed in maintaining her past unique position which has been mainly responsible for the perpetuation of the feeling of racial superiority, and not in a few cases, of arrogance. The immediate results of the "Disarmament Conference" seem to be a big increase in armaments! The latest news from Europe show that the different countries of Europe have entered into an insane race in the manufature of arms. When the final spark that will set fire to this huge depot will be lighted, nobody is in a position to say at present. But the materials for the conflagration are being collected with feverish haste. Germany is introducing compulsory military training and conscription. Italy is following in the same footsteps. England is building "super-dreadnoughts." Japan is very busy with her army organisation though some of her civil departments are languishing for want of funds. France is defending hereself at an enormous cost with the most expensive devices against bombing. The condition of Europe seems like that of a man possessed of an evil spirit, mentioned in the Gospels, who was cured of the complaint for the time being, but who had to endure the presence of more evil spirits who coming back found the "house swept and garnished." Though there may be suffering and unemployment in the other branches of industry, the armament factories are working overtime and declaring good profits. Such is the kind of superiority that India is called upon to admire in the West! Europe to an "inferior" Asiatic looks like a veritable jungle where the beasts of national animosities, of economic jealousies, of racial rivalries and political hatred are allowd to roam freely. It has been remarked by an English writer that the foundations of European civilisation are built on gun-powder. The person who made that comment is stating a veritable fact. For, that is unmistakably one of the foundations of European culture. Alice in the Wonderland might say that it is love that makes the world go round, but it is racial hatred and animosities that provide just at present the momentum to this insane career of destruction. It would be interesting to find how England and other Western countries are going to parade their air of superiority in the moral and intellectual spheres in India in

military uniform! Of course the Indian might applaud the trim appearance of the military serjeant. But when the serjeant puts on high moral airs and brags of his superiority in other spheres one cannot but think that there is something fundamentally wrong some where in his make up.

The peace of Europe, according to a recent pronouncement of Mussolini, rests on "bayonets." A typical illustration of Western and Christian superiority! During the sixteenth anniversary of the original fighting troops he spoke in that strain to the "Black Shirt" organization—the colour is significant. One can see the scientific experts of the civilised European countries which claim superiority over the eastern ones working in their laboratories to perfect the engines of destruction, to discover a poison that would wipe out hundreds of God's creatures in a minute, and maim others, for life. Such are the manifestations of western superiority!" For all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword,' said Christ. But the modern followers seem to be wiser than their Master! Europe is now a huge powder magazine—the age of the sword has gone, and that of bombs has come in and a few more sparks as the late war, would completely bring out its complete destruction, a fate not altogether undeserved. And India is also indirectly and unwillingly dragged into the vortex of European politics, into this European charnel-house.

NOT MERE STRENGTH CAN DO IT.



Look! How he arrests the career of this restless horse! Not mere strength can do it. He must have nerve, he must have vigour. There's no doubt, "AMRITA" has given him all these. It strengthens the body, tones up the nerves and adds vigour to the brain.

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MAXIM GORKY-AN APPRECIATION.
(1866-1936.)

Perhaps Maxim Gorki is the most known amongst the foreign writers, by all classes of people, in this country by the oppressed classes in particular. Other foreign authors are popular amongst the intellingentsia here who are familiar with English or any other foreign language. It is his particularly famous novel "MOTHER" which has made him popular in this country, since this great work has already been translated in almost all the Indian languages. There is a special appeal in this particular work of his, to us, struggling with almost similar conditions as are depicted in this novel. There is the common chord between Pavel and his associates and our worker of misery, suffering, hunger, hatred and yearning towards an ideal by the oppressed people-in fact the whole scene might have happened in India; that is why we are attracted by Maxim Gorky and his works. To the working class readers, this novel today, with the success attined by the working class in Russia, has special appeal.

Alexy Maximovich Peshkov was born in Nizni Novgorod in the year 1866., in a poor family. His father died when he was yet a child, and he lived with his uncle for some time. But, in consequence of his mother having married again, the young Peshkov was left at the mercy of his uncle who apprenticed him to a shoemaker. Even from his childhood he was struggling against oppression, misery, filth and ignorance. His later change from one form of servitude to another may be a common one for all in similar circumstances. We see him as a porter, baker, hawker and a tramp during this very period he learns to read and write. His position as an office boy to an advocate gave him the much needed chance, to develop his reading propensities. He tramped the whole length of Russia, taking odd jobs on the way. He tried to enter the school at Kazan, but as he says, "it was not the fashion to give education for nothing". The last position he held was that of a clerk in Tiflis.

During this period his first story was published. The author of "Makar Chudra" had made his public entry into the writers' world under the pen name of Maxim Gorky-Gorky which means "bitter", "misery". Then came the Drama "in the lower depths" Dec. 1902.) which brought him to prominence. The philosophical thieves, vagabonds and prostitutes of Na Dne became very popular. This particular play which was later translated into all the European languages made him an international figure for some time. The play had a triumphant run of 500 nights in Berlin only. It depicts of the misery and filth in which the lowest classes were weltering, with a terrific realism which only Gorky who had gone through similar experiences in his varied professions, could write. Tolstoy asked him once, if he had met many of the prostitutes he had so realistically depicted. "Yes", was the laconic reply. When in later years, he was intimate with Tolstoy, he read some of the scenes from this play. Tolstoy said "One notices always that you jump like a cock on all and everything, and more, you always want to paint the grooves and cracks with your own paint—. . you had better not put the plaster... your language is very skilful with all kinds of tricks..."

"26 men and a girl is the next story that brings him into prominence. The story concerns the miserable life of the workers shut out from light 16 hours daily in the dark underground cllers of a bakery whose only sunshine was the little innocent hawker girl. A soldier has a bet with these bakers that he would seduce this innocent little girl in which he succeeds. After this when the girl in her usual routine visits these people, they throw stones and jeer at her. That is the story written with a pitiless realism.

His heroes are generally outcastes, wastrels or tramps. They are hungry, they hate the existing order, they are miserable, pessimistic some times, and they are lost in the world hurled against the might of the social conditions, and political oppression. The fellow traveller concluded his story "In the Steppes" thus: "I am not to blame for what happened as you are not to blame for what happened to me, and nobody is to blame for anything; for we are like *beasts*".

Again the same man is talking about his companions of his wanderings. "Indeed it was all the same to us if at any time he had been a student, detective, thief; one thing only was important, that at the moment of our acquanitance he should be our equal-hungry, enjoying the special attention of the police in towns and the suspicion of the peasants in the villages-that he should hate, with the hatred of a weak, hunted hungry beast-*that he should dream of a universal revenge on all and everything...*"

In "The creatures that once were men" the boarders of a wretched wayside inn who were living in the most filthy conditions make bold to send an application to the authorities against the rapacity of the innkeeper and when the innkeeper promises to better the conditions for his tramp boarders, this satisfies them though nothing was done because the "Quality of being soothed by mere words as if by incatation is still predominantly a Russian Character".

During the next period he takes to writing novels, the famous among which are Mother (1907), foma Gordyev, Spy etc., During this period he came in contact with Lenin and his co-workers. His "Song of the Petrel' brought him under the wrath of the Czar and he was banished. During the next few years he lived in Italy. It was at this time that he was elected to the Imperial Academy of Science, but this was annuled by a Czarist decree "as the individual concerned was a political suspect". He actively-sympathised with the Bolsheviks and took part in the demonstrations of 1905 for which he was arrested and sentenced. In fact he was one of the financial Powers behind the Revolutionary movement. His literary earnings, he unstintedly gave to the cause of the movement. His income, in fact, went to help his political friends for the furtherance of the Revolution.

When released he left Russia on a tour in Europe and the American continent. This was a triumphal march for the proletarian author, who was received in Berlin where he was already famous by his drama, "In the lower Depths". He continued his travles and went to New York where he was well received on his landing. But this welcome had a short cut in that he seems to have wounded the moral sentiments of the American Public as they found that his wife who had accompanied him was not "legally" married to him. Mark Twain the famous author and humorist, familiar to us all, who was to have presided at the banquet in honour of the Russian writer refused to attend the function on this account. It was bitter and much wounded Gorky that he left the shores of America. His characteristic writing of this visit is the "City of the Yellow Devil". He then returned to

Italy and settled down at Capri. At this period i. e. 1907 onwards, popularity with the intellectuals waned but it increased with the working class.

The third period of his writings begins from the year 1913, which forms probably the best part of his literary life. In this year he started a magazine, "Letopies", and later the first of the series of his autobiographical trilogy "Childhood" was published. "Reminiscences of my youth" and "University" etc followed. "Fragments from a dairy" came out in 1923, "Decad nce" (1927) and "Reminiscences of Tolstoy and Chekhov" which is his last work. In his series of autobiographical work we come across with the lowest class of people, wrung down by poverty,-creatures that are living because they cannot die, with their pleasures, their sorrows, their struggles. This picture of Czarist day Russia is common in all countries and all climes, if one were to write a similar story, one might come across the same filth, the same misery wretchedness etc. The picture drawn is a living picture.

After the Revolution of 1917, though he was not entirely in agreement with the policy of the Communist Dictatorship because of his personal friendship with Lenin and his powerful position in literary circles, he was tolerated inspite of the fact that he alone dared to criticise the party. He was looked upon with much disfavour, in the beginning, but his work in connection with literature made him hold his position. In fact it was he who helped the starving authors during the critical period of the Communist Dictatorship (1918-21) salvaging the Russian culture which was going down. He founded with the assistance of the leaders of the Communist Party, a centralised literary establishment for translating etc., and thus saved the starving intellectuals of the period. Finally he worked in collaboration with Henry Barbusse in the Anti-war movement. He had, since then, thrown himself wholeheartedly in the cultural development which followed the mighty upheaval in Russia.

As a tribute to his work the town of Nizni, where he was born, has been renamed after him and an Airship, the most modern of its kind was named after him (This met with a tragic crash, when some of the leading Soviet engineers perished). The last we hear of him is when he broadcasted a speech to the children of Russia in February last when they wrote him of their desire to become writers.

With his death last month the world lost a unique personality.

His characters like the characters in most of the works of Tolstoy, Dostovesky, and other writers of the time, are idealists, philosophers, thirsting for knowledge. "When the possibility of freeing himself and others, from oppression became clear in his mind, the injustice of the present state of things appeared more cruel and more terrible than ever...and he longed... not only for freedom but for the punishment responsible for this cruel injustice. It was knowledge that gave this possibility. ." They hate injustice and want. They desire for changing this state of affairs and they hurl themselves against these things. Most of the characters are accustomed to go into soliloquies, sometimes very tiresome without being able to come to any decisive answer. One finds a sort of helpless resignation to the inevitable in the characters of Destovesky or the extremely pessimistic Chekhovian characters. Chekhov is peculiar in this —his extreme pessimism is almost suffocating. But Gorky's men are carefree, they, sort of, enjoy the filth and stench of the back streets and cellars as it were—miserable hungry outcasts struggling to be free. They are living full of life and energy. Like his contemporaries, he depicts the people of his time, their hopes and aspirations, their miseries and sorrows and disappointments, with terrific realism.

The wonderful thing about him is that he saw and recorded things which other people were incapable of seeing, and if they saw, powerless to record.

Of Tolstoy, with whom he was more or less intimate, he writes "And I who do not believe in God, looked at him for some reason, very cautiously and a little timidly, I looked and thought—the man is Godlike."

He lived to see the success of the aspirations of his heroes, his vagabonds, his Pavels; he lived to see the "soul of Russia" realise itself in the mighty experiments by Lenin and later by Stalin. Being a born and tempermental pacifist, it is true much that was going on in the new order was not to his liking. He even stayed out of Russia for sometime. But the call of the new culture, the call of the new generation to build up a revolutionary culture could not keep him away for long. He threw himself into this mighty task till his death.

One cannot close without reference to the speech of comrade Molotov Premier of the Soviet Union, at the funeral on the 20th June '36. He said that after the death of Lenin, the death of Maxim Gorky was the second greatest loss to Russia. He paid a glowing tribute to the literary, social and revolutionary activities of the late Maxim Gorky. He said that Maxim Gorky had worked for the cause of the proletariat and the oppressed people of the world until the last day of his life. He has tirelessly worked against war and for the protection of culture and civilization from the barbarous and inhuman acts of Fascism. He was an uncompromising opponent of capitalism and Facism; he was the best friend of humanity, of culture and civilization, of the proletariat and oppressed peoples of the world.

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OFFICE ACCEPTANCE MANIA

(By S. Vedagiri)

There are some in this country with whom the office acceptance question has become all in all in preference to any other activity. With Mr. Satyamoorthy the question has become a mania. In fact it is a serious infectious malady which has been spreading all over the country and eating into the vitals of Congress politics, by clouding all other issues of immediate struggle. Everywhere, we hear of the plea for office acceptance, particularly from the old Guard, and where no such statements are made, we meet with a significant silence which leaves no room for doubt as to the probable line that will be followed, if the question were to come to the fore. There are some who feel that everything is not alright with office acceptance, but still they would try to interpret it in an opportunistic manner to satisfy the rising enthusiasts of the latest the tucories in vogue, and to suit the changing moods of the rank and file of the Congress. The latter class are like the people who still want to maintain ancient customs and usages by explaining such need on scientific grounds. Still some of the arguments are put in all earnestness and sincerity that it is necessary at this stage to examine some of the points urged in favour of such a course.

Mr. K. M. Munshi in his series of articles favouring office acceptance has made out certain points which have to be met. He pleads that in the face of the impossibility of a Revolution, and with strict control of the working committee on the actions of the ministers or those that are following the lead and in the face of the general demoralisation that has set in all over the country, why give up a chance that will not certainly lead to further demoralisation? And particularly when other parties will take advantage of the offices and use them against the best interests of the country.

If as Mr. Munshi thinks there is general demoralisation in the country as a result of the failure of the civil disobedience movement, owing to three years of ordinance rule and repression, is it not necessary for us to closely examine the causes of this failure, and chalk out a programme for the effective carrying out of the struggle for freedom and Independence? Or should we take things as they come, enter the Assembly, work the constitution, accept ministry and thereby have a Swadeshi Government with Indian ministers etc? The idea or wrecking the constitution aimed by Congress in the period of demoralisation as Mr. Munshi puts it, will hardly bring in better results if the Congress were to accept ministries into the bargain. One would imagine that at a time when the rot has set in, sending people into the executive of the Government will hardly help to give momentum to the struggle. Besides the question of wrecking the constitution which is the aim of the Congress party and that of working it which is implied in the acceptance of offices stand poles apart. You cant have it both ways. Either you go and work the constitution for what it is worth and say so (does not matter if it is liberalism) or honestly stand by the Congress resolution and try to wreck it. The fact is that at the back of their minds, Satyamoorthy and Munshi have the idea of utilising the official positions thus secured for bringing in Improvements as far as is possible. Satyamoorthy in his various speeches has said so. In fact he has

tabled a certain minimum programme which he will attempt to carry out within the framework of the constitution— of course, if possible. What for instance is the programme that he will attempt to carry out? He will reduce the salaries of the ministers, say upto a thousand, will encourage HONORARY service in *others,* will make the police wear Khadi etc. If this were his programme he will be able to carry it out unless of course people dont so readily come forward for *Honorary service.* With these things accomplished (one does not see why the Governor should not oblige the minister by allowing them to take less salaries and after all, it is of little consequence whether the police wear khadi or any other cloth) the ministers would find themselves inside the labrynth of the constitution, when the pocket resignations will not be useful. Particularly after the ministers have come to understand the Governor at close quarters, the temptation to continue the trial for a longer time cannot be minimised. If the steel frame of the Congress cabinet is not brought round to understand the new situations which would inevitably arise, the era of resignations would set in. *But the resignations may not be from the ministerial positions, but from the Congress* because the minister who is able to see the otherside of the constitution, better than an outsider, instead of being the wrecker of the constitution he becomes the prop—a strength to the Government.

It is possible that one cannot see eye to eye with Munshi & Co. For instance when Munshi condemns the Dominion Status idea, he is not quite clear in his new definition of "Purna Swaraj" by which we only mean that the goal is to generate national power which will secure such Swaraj (Independence) in future. How distant the future, is Mr. Munshi makes it quite clear: "unless miracles happen, Indias entertaining hopes of being carried on by the tide of World Revolution to the shores of freedom is illusory...India cannot secure Independence without being an organised nation with an irresistible collective will...and when a revolution comes in some form or other it is possible only through non violent satyagraha which while it leaves the SHAPE OF GOVERNMENT INTACT alters its spirit and outlook..." Here we have it in the words of Munshi. It is much the same as the spiritual swaraj of Gandhi. The fact is that the existing form of Government machinery will be unsuited to the needs of the oppressed masses of India and therefore the question of altering the spirit of the Government may suit Messrs Munshi & Co. only, who may prefer to live at ease and in comfort in their cosy homes at Malabar hill and Mylapore with the hope that the cursed revolution may never come. The masses have reached such a stage from which deliverance can come only through complete Independence which implies a complete overhauling of the existing form of Government. If, as according to Mr. Munshi the shape of the Government is to be left in tact, it means that we leave in tact the present form of imperialist exploitation substituting Mr. Brown for Mr. White.— Mr. Munshi certainly can advocate office acceptance, which means working the constitution, but let him understand that the masses in the country have no use for such a 'Purna Swaraj.' Besides our interpretation becomes clear in view of the statement of Satyamoorty who visualises his erstwhile tormentors — Jailors Judges, police officials salaming the new ministers !

Then there is the other point which these office acceptancewalas put forward: what was good for Zaglul and De Valera is good enough for India. There are two ways of looking at this question. One is whether the things were good for Zaglul and Egypt De Valera and Ireland and how it was obtained. What is the condition

of Egypt after the acceptance of the treaty. British Imperialism has got a better hold over Egypt than it ever had before. The suspension of the constitution followed by repression and collapse of the struggle of the Egyptian people after the securing of the sham Independence is too fresh to be forgotten. So what was considered good by Zaglul has proved to be absolutely harmful to the cause of Egyptian Independence.

What of De Valera? How was the treaty which was concluded in 1921 with Great Britain extracted? Britain was compelled after fierce armed struggle by the Irish sinn feiners to come to terms with the sinn Feiners as representing the whole of the Irish People. Britain came to terms only when it saw that further resistence would have meant the complete severance of Ireland from British Domination. It was not a round table conference of the type in which the congress was one of the parties that was invited. It was not the attempt to have an agreed constitution which Satyamurthy is dreaming. Besides how does De Valera who had helped to force Britain to come to terms treat the Irish people today. The hated Military tribunals and other repressive measures which were the features of the Cosgrave Government are used with the utmost rigour against his erstwhile comrades who fought shoulder to shoulder with him—the members of the Irish Republican army. The condition of the Irish massess is as bad as it ever was. Do we bear in mind lessons of history or do we not when we direct movements in our own country?

History has given its verdict: What was good for Zaglul or Valera was not good enough for the Egyptian people or the Irish people. The Nationalist Irish Bourgeoisie is celebrating its "National Victory its "State" maturity by declaring a war of life and death against the Irish Labour movement. So said Lenin in 1914. The words are true even today.

Then another. Office acceptance is a question of strategy. It is not a question of taking votes. These points of strategy should be decided by the war lords of the Congress. These questions of strategy are not to be discussed by papers or by people in street corners. It comes to this. We in the congress high command know what is best for the Indian people, better than they know it themselves. We do not want to have any discussions by the rabble and we cannot tolerate any opposition. It is Hitlers Ghost coming to East. Rajagopalachari may be just hinting as to what is in store for you under the Swarajist or Congress Government of the future.

We are willing to admit that office acceptance question is a question of strategy that has got to be fully discussed, but not to be forced on the people like Hitler. After examining all the arguments in favour of this question, we are convinced that no good will accrue from such a course and that it will lead to further demoralisation. We have to intensify the struggle for independence from outside which alone can bring success. But merely accepting jobs without any strong movement outside will be suicidal.

A SOVIET SPAIN?

The following remarkable contribution in the political Quarterly by Mr. H. R. G. Greves, shows recent developments in Spain tending towards a Soviet Republic. Our readers are aware that a Civil war is progressing in Spain between the Reactionary and the Revolutionary forces and so far the Left Wing Government now in power has successfully routed the rebel forces. But one cannot say that the situation is still free from serious repurcussions. This article gives us valuable information about the conditions of Spain before the Civil War.—Ed.

The constitution of 1931 began with the proud assertion that Spain is a Republic of workers. Five years after the revolution, no description of that country could be more fitting. For the moment the worker's organisations come very near to holding destiny of Spain in their hands, and it is a striking evidence of their strength that discussion should now resolve so largely around the problem of the State structure through which Spanish Socialism is likely to express itself and the exact method by which this may be achieved. But, flushed as they are with their remarkable victory at the Polls, it may be that the parties of the Left are over-confident and are indulging in too extravagant hopes. What then are the realities underlying these recent and interesting developments.

About the strength of the Revolutionary Left there can be no question. Proof of it is available on all sides. Spontaneous demonstration of their new-found self confidence bursts from the various working class movements at the slightest opportunity, and it is not without some embarrassing effects of their leaders. One day general strikes occur at the rate of about two a month in Madrid and they are not to be lightly regarded, for they imply a complete and awe-inspiring standstill of the life of the capital when such a bourgeois relic as the private car owner thinks it wiser not to venture on to the streets.

The remarkable electoral success of the Popular Front on Feb. 16 is the chief explanation of subsequent proletarian assertiveness. It came as a complete surprise to the supporters of the Right, whose hopes of victory had grown as the campaign proceeded. To what was it due?

It would be foolish to over-look the lack of inspiration and of leadership in the Ceda, the confederation of Right Wing Parties.

The part played by the revolt of Oct. 1934 in influencing the election is one of the most interesting questions that face the student of recent political developments, in Spain. The relation between the two events has not yet been sufficiently stressed. Undoubtedly one of the chief factors in determining the People's attitude to the Right Wing Government was the Methods it adopted in suppressing this revolt. Use of the foreign legion to defeat Spain citizens in their own country was a tactical blunder so grave that one can only conclude from it that the Government was unable to rely on its own home troops. By this action Spanish pride was keenly mortified and the heroic tale of ill-armed workers in victory and in defeat was set against an ignoble Background of Moorish barbarism. Incarceration of 30,000 citizens for political offences, many of them without trial, implied a harshness that lent point to the Left-Wing accusations of fascist tendencies. The arrest and detention of Senor Azana followed by his exoneration from blame did not

improve the Government's case. On the other hand his imprisonment and that of the socialist leaders simply gave them the claims of all who suffer for a cause in which they believe.

Probably more was done to weld together the working class through this effort and martyrdom that was or could be achieved by all the negotiations for compromise that Left-wing organisors have undertaken for so long. It meant that the United Front answered an emotional need felt far and wide and was by no means, a temporary arrangement between party bosses for party purposes. There is evidence in plenty of how deep this feeling went. Leaders and their personal rivalries have sometimes stood in the way of agreement but the spontaneous demand of their followers made the united front a reality. It is thus that to ascribe the popular front's victory to their agreement on a ten point policy is in some degree superficial. That agreement is of great importance but so are the conditions which made it possible, if not inevitable.

In the same way the decisions of the syndicalists to vote where in 1933 they had abstained while it contributed largely to the Left's electoral success, was itself determined by the previous course of events. The hatred and fear of Fascism has gradually penetrated the European Trade Union Movements. In Spain, the Vigours given to it by Italian, German and Austrian persecutions were enhanced by experience nearer home.

An interesting analogy can be thrown between these developments and unsuccessful revolt of Dec. 1930, which provided its martyrs and its exiles and prepared the way for the calm assumption of power by the Revolutionaries, four months later. Sorel should be a popular philosopher of the Spanish Republic. Between 1930 and 1936 the whole trend of Spanish political movements has shifted fundamentally to the left.

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The Popular Front's ten point Programme is a constitution of the policy of the first Azana Government. It is not socialistic and the socialists are not joining the government, being content to support it and, if necessary to bring pressure to bare up on it from outside. They regard it as a valuable preparation for future action. Senor Azana promised that this agreement would be carried out to the smallest detail, and his successor, Senor Casares, Quiroga, may be expected to redeem this pledge to the full, for unless he does so and acts with evident energy and conviction, he will precipitate revolt.

The programme includes an amnesty for all political prisoners the reinstatement of all officials removed by the reactionary Government and carrying out of the original land reform law. The first has been completed under impulsion from below the 2nd and 3rd are being done, as opportunity occurs and with considerable rapidity. Fulfilment of the advanced educational programme set out by Marcelino Domingo and Fernando De Lof Rios in the first year of the Republic is another important item of the policy. On April 14, eight new schools in Madrid were opened by the former once again minister of public Instruction. The Programme is being proceeded with energetically and already the most impressive building in many of the villages of Spain is the new State of School.

Other aspects of the policy are the application of article 26 and the placing of the Bank of Spain under ministerial supervision. In general the policy is one of defending and applying the republican constitution in its entirety and extending the Social service activity of the first 2 and a half year.

Land reform is likely to prove the most important feature of the Government's programme. It is here that the Left has already shown its power and that the syndicalists in particular have

forced the pace. In one month 70,000 Junreros or peasant ploughmen were given lands. The Socialists emphasise 2 factors bearing on it. First they point out, the land is not given absolutely but conditionally, the state remaining the owner. Then, they add it is a very inadequate indication both of the intentions behind the land reform act of 1932 and of the necessities which will govern agricultural reform. In many places the peasants will be unable to render the land productive without state help. Irrigation Schemes in particular begun some years ago, must now be pushed ahead.

What, then are the prospects for Spain? The dominant fact is the present strength of the extreme left. How long will they be satisfied with the work of the popular Front government? For the moment the socialists may use the government to take the preliminary steps while the way for the social revolution is prepared. It has suppressed the Fascist movement, and the course through which this was brought about is significant. Fascist students and local sectors of that party publicly declared a vendetta against the Socialist leaders warning them that 2 would be killed for every one fascist who died. Attempts on the lives of Caballero and Jimenez de Asua were unsuccessful although police were killed. This campaign culminated in the murder of a Magistrate who had condemned several fascists to long terms of imprisonment and in further deaths during processions. The syndicalists seized upon this to declare a general strike in protest. The government thereupon agreed in consultation with the extremist leaders to suppress the fascist party arresting many of the local leaders throughout the country. As a result it is reckoned that a thousand were imprisoned. Senor Azana also used these violent attacks to pass a law depriving retired officers of their pensions, and privileges if they took part in the Anti-Republican activities. The victory went to the Left, but it is interesting that it was or appeared to be at the behest of these who were ready to declare a general strike.

Again the very completeness of the general strike when it comes is evidence of Left-wing strength. An office or shop that opens does as its peril. A man who carries a sack may be ordered to throw it down. The same determination to maintain working-class, solidarity is seen in a mere procession of the united front. The citizen who fails to doff his hat to the red-banner is as much a subject of general disapproval as in his counterpart in England when 'God save the King' is played.

The workers in mines, breweries and transport and other undertakings who, after a stay-in-strike, have from time to time elected their own management committee which then ran the enterprise on its own responsibility. Although these industrial experiments have been shortlived, they have always served both to procure some measure of capitulation on the part of the owners and to suggest the capacity of the workers to control, their own workshops.

In the same way, the burning of churches has added to the self-confidence of the workers. When it was indicated recently that a religious order school would shortly be burned, the government took the opportunity to seize it and convert it to the uses of state education. But attitude of the government is, its enemies assert, one of weakness if not connivance, but it is at least realistic. Senor Azana himself has best expressed it. Law must be and shall be enforced, he said in effect, but we must remember the terrible suffering the poverty-stricken Spanish people have had to undergo during this time of reaction and oppression. Law, makes it unconstitutional for a religious order to keep a school, and it is typical of present day, proletarian strategy that the most determined activity is in compliance with the

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spirit of the law, aiming chiefly at hastening its application.

The decisions recently taken at the Saragossa conference of syndicalists to set up local soviets throughout Spain is a further indication of the same self-reliance and determination. But it is more. It means that regionalist and separatist feeling, always powerful in Spain will tend to unite still further with anarcho-syndicalism, and Spanish form of communism. It means too that the syndicalists have now entered the political field more definitely ever than when they-co-operated with the socialists at the election. That being so, the very fact which has been their weakness in the past, the absence of central leader-ship and the reliance instead upon an intensely realistic, direct action in each locality may now prove to their strength if they effectively ally with the socialists. In such an alliance they, would supply much of the local zeal, fearlessness and initiative, while the socialists would take the lead at the centre and in co-ordianation.

Much has to be done before such an alliance can materialise but the tendencies towards it are very strong. Underlying them all is the demand of the rank and file among whom the idea of solidarity has penetrated to a highly interesting degree. The farewell shouted to some of the delegates as they left for the conference was typical of the present feeling— Bring back an alliance.

On the socialist side the position is more complicated. Prieto and Caballero have moved apart since the days when they were colleagues in the first Azana government. Prieto is more ready to cooperate with capitalist democracy. Coballero is an open advocate of alliance with the syndicalists for the purposes of social revolution and the present tendency of the party is with him. His view triumphed in fixing the venue of the forthcomimg socialist conference in Madrid, rather than in Asturias and again in postponing the conference from June until the Autumn. Moreover, the Socialists ideal of state supervision of economic organisation combined with regional central of particular undertaking is fundamentally in harmony with the Anarcho syndicalist Ideal of communism libertario, a system of separate works and area control councils federated under central committees of the Iberian confederation of autonomous communes.

The Spanish workers movement is superficially divided with its C. I. C. A. and confederacion, National de Trabajadores (C. N. T.); with its socialist union de General De Trabajo (U. G. T.) and its communist Union de Hermanos Proletarios (U. H. P.) but there was never a time at which both ideologically and in practical programme it was more united. Against a conflict of personalities can be set spontaneous cry for unity from an oppressed working class, which in its poverty and in its dynamic ideals has much in common with Russia.

THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION IN EUROPE.

Until May of this year France had stood high and dry, untouched by the Social revolution that had swept over Europe. At the beginning of May a French General Election produced a clear Left majority (that is a majority or the Front Populaire consisting of Socialists, Radical-Socialists, and communists) and with it a clear prospect of the first virtually Socialist Government known to the Third Republic. Before that resultant Government could take office, France was plunged into revolutionary strikes. Factories and business premises were "occupied" by the strikers on the approved model of the contemporary Europen practice. M. Leon Blum, whose uncomfortable fate it was to be the first Prime Minister in a Socialist Government in France, promptly capitulated and granted everything that the strikers demanded.

But that was not the interesting thing. What was interesting was that for nearly 18 years after the Great war which destroyed so much including the Social order of Europe, France persisted in ignoring the signs of the times and contrived for so long to avoid the penalty. "The famous two hundred families, of France. symbolic of the previleged class, took no precaution for the safeguarding of their previleges, threw no sops to the advancing cerbery. Until M. Leon Blum took office, there was no social legislation in France.

The Great War massacred the very flower of Europe's manhood. In 1914 there were some 4000,000, to 5000,000 men in England between the age of twenty and fortyfive. One in every four of those men was killed, and he was the best man of the four. The next best man was maimed. The worst two were preserved intact. As an experiment in dysgenics—if one may coin a word to express the opposite meaning to that of eugenics, it was a devastatingly effective process. The chain of tradition upon which true progress depends was broken. A link in it was removed and could not be replaced. The generation of the best man was destroyed. They had received the training and traditions passed down by the former such generation. They could not pass it on. The new generation was denied the heritage of their forefathers. Education, commerce, the moral, intellectual and spiritual standards were all as a result debased. The so called upper classes who up to 1914 did effectively control the affairs of mankind, had comitted one of the greatest blunders recorded in history by consenting to allow a war of such a kind to devastate their earth. As a flower flourishes and dies, so pre-war ruling classes brought about their own downfall.

Results follow causes as the night follows the day. In Russia the change was swift and complete. The "lower" classes seized political power and the commercial system of capitalism was destroyed. Gradually and with greater palpability the social revolution spread over Europe. Except in France, the entire rentier class of continental Europe disappeared. In Great Britain for the most part violence was side tracked by rapidly cumulative socialist legislation. The attempted General strike of 10 years ago could get no "bite" in general discontent.

Democracy or fascism? These are the words of politicians meaning little. The theoretic system in Great Britain

is that of democracy. Has that system any effect in curbing the power or the rapacity of Governments? Can income-tax, rates, and other taxes the means to governmental and municipal dictatorship in social and commercial life—be withstood in democratic Britain any more than in fascist" Germany? And what does fascist mean in practice? Signor Mussolini and Herr Hitler are labour leaders. They depend for their power not upon upper class or middle class, but upon lower class support. In Italy and in Germany Nationalisation in every sense is the order of the day; and it is to the masses of the people that Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini make their frenzied emotional appeals as the indispensable routine method of maintaining their authority. Great Britain differs from every other country in Europe except France, in having a middle class. But if one judges by the extent to which the British government confiscates the property of middle class and redistributes it annually in one or another among the lower class, Britain in operative practice is the most socialist country in the world, without any single exception.

France the last stronghold.

Recent events in France may therefore prove to be of historic interest. The first ballot in the election took place on April 26th. By the French constitution a second ballot is necessary when a candidate fails to obtain an absolute majority the first time. That arrangement nearly always leads to complicated party manoeuvring, as when Tories vote communist at the first ballot with the only object of keeping out a Radical candidate, their calculation being that at the second ballot it will be easier to defeat a communist than a Radical. Before this particular election took place, the issue was generally regarded as uninteresting. There was the old question whether France could continue to be defended by the Laval policy of deflation by economists. There was the question of Germany and the League covenant; but foreign policy no more divided French opinion at this than at any other election. In short there was nothing of much interest in it.

That diagnosis proved to be true only in the sense that the calm that precedes the storm may be uninteresting. The result of the first ballot was that only 185 out of 618 deputies were elected out right. No fewer than 433 remained to be elected at the second ballot, which always takes place a week after the first, Sunday being the day in both cases. The voting of April 28th showed a wave of communist success, pronounced enough to produce an immediate slump on the Paris Bourse. But confidence quickly returned, because it could be never known how far the first ballot had been abused by such tactics as the Tory tactics aforesaid.

The second ballot took place on May 3rd with immediately alarming consequence to the privileged class. For the first time in French history the parties of the Left had won a clear majority. It became certain that France would have a Socialist Government under M. Leon Blum. On the following day the quotation of the Bank of France stock fell by about 33%, a startling enough fall to indicate the ravages made upon financial confidence. Everyone assumed that the now certain Socialist Government would pass a new law for bank in the sense of nationalising it, but it was recognized by sensible people that such a change would not be necessarily or wholly bad. None the less, as a precautionary measure on the part of the monied class, there did set in a somewhat spectacular flight from the Franc, and gold left the country in large quantities.

L. Blum, promptly recognising that a Major Crise De confidence might ruin his ministry at the outset devoted himself in a few weeks that remained

before his Government would be formed to stemming the flight from the franc. He made a speech on May 10, a week after the second ballot had taken place, in which he announced that his policy would be to defend the franc and to resist devaluation. On parliamentary grounds he had no alternative to such a protestation, because the election result placed him at the mercy of the communist vote in the Chamber, even though the communists would not participate in his ministry. The state of parties resulting from the second ballot was that the left group had an aggregate of 381 seats, including 146 Socialists (49 gains) 116 Radical-Socialists (42 losses) and 82 Communists (62 gains). The Right group had an aggregate of 237 seats. If therefore the communist vote were switched from the Left to the Right, the Left group aggregate of seats would be reduced to 299 and the Right group aggregate increased to 319. M. Blum therefore had to dance to a communist tune.

The paradox was that such a necessity should impose upon him the duty of defending the franc and opposing devaluation. The fact was that the communist party at the election had committed itself to the defence of the franc and resistance to devaluation. The explanation was not that the commuists want to keep up the value of the property it was their ultimate purpose to confiscate but that they had appealed for and had won many bourgeois votes on a promise or financial correctitude. It did not take big capital long to find refuge abroad and the initial panic therefore abated within a fortnight. The loss of gold to the Bank of France by the same token slowed in its tempo. Political opinion in Paris settled down to such harmless speculation as the probability of M. Herriot's refusal of the foreign office, portfolio and the rival chances; in such an event, of M. Chautemps and M. Bonnet. Abroad there was little excitement because it was surmised that M. Blum's policy at Geneva would be indistinguishable from that of M. Flandin.

Suddenly the blow fell. On May, 27th strikes broke out in Paris Aeroplane and Motor car works. The strikers occupied the factories. They maintained the strictest discipline and took elaborate precautions against fire, theft and damage to plant. They demanded a forty-hour week as the chief item in their programme. Within 24 hours the strike assumed grave preparations. 30 thousand workers seized the big Renault works at Billencourt. The ministry of labour thereupon consulted with representatives of both employers and workers and arranged a conference for May 29th. The conference could not take place because the employers insisted that the works be evacuated and the work resumed before a settlement could be reached, the workers demanding a settlement as a condition precedent to the resumption of work. On May 29th, twenty thousand more workmen struck. The disturbing aspect of what was taking place was that it took place with such clock-work precision and discipline and it took place a week before M. Blum was due to form his ministry.

Only a short time before a similar experience had fallen to Spain where a victory of the Left at the Polls had excited appetites among the extremist agitators such as the Left Government itself could not satisfy. The French extremists were too impatient to wait even for the formation of the Blum cabinet they had themselves produced by their votes; and the occupation of factories as a strike technique was obviously copied from the many other contemporary preludes to the overthrow of Governments democratically elected. There was some ground at first to suspect that some of the misguided big industrialists in France had deliberately

encouraged the strikers in the political hope of upsetting M. Blum at the outset of his ministerial experiment. They calculated that, thereby M. Blum's position might be so weakend as to prevent his forming a ministry, for they knew that the Radical Socialist leaders were at the same time threatening M. Blum to withdraw the 116 votes at their disposal in the chamber unless he ejected the strikers from the factories.

The new chamber dully assembled on June 1st without ceremony and without uproar. Indeed it looked on that day as if the strikes were dying down. Many works had been evacuated as the preliminary of negotiation for a settlement. But on June 2nd the disturbance broke out afresh. Some sixty factories, not confined to Paries were again occupied by about 20 thousand strikers. Within twentyfour hours the resumed strike spread so rapidly that some three hundred thousand workers were now involved, and sundry forms of violence such as the Imprisonment of Directors had begun to be practised. The strike had become national in its scope and the strike leaders were loosing control. The flow of gold from the Bank again began to increase. The detail loss of gold estimated up to that time being the equivalent of some £ 50, 000,000. It was in such a back ground that M. Blum formed his government on June 4th. It was composed of socialists and Radical-socialists supported by the communists. The Port folio of foreign affairs went to M. Delbos. M. Herriot was elected President of the Chamber.

M. Blum took prompt steps to tide off—disorder by promissing immediate legislation to give effect to striker's demands. In a broad cast statement he made on june 4th, he announced that he would forthwith present bills to the Chamber to establish the 40 hour week with holidays on full pay and the right of collective contracts. He appealed to the workers throught the country to restore order so that the necessary legislation could be promptly promulgated. His appeal was some what circumscribed, because at the time there were no news-papers being produced and he could reach only those who actually listened to his talk. On June 6th the strike again died down, and that same day M. Blum's Government received a vote of confidence in the Chamber by a majority of 174 (384 against 210). The Government had declared its intention to table bills on the following day for granting all the worker's demands, for reforming the Bank of France, for Nationalising war industries and starting a programme of public works. The necessary revenue would be raised by levies on large private fortunes, by tightening the collection of income tax and preventing fraud, and from the general economic recovery, the government prophesied. Finally the Government said, there would be no devaluation.

What was obviously true, was tha though shop strikes had now been added to the industrial strikes, though the newspapers were almost wholly suspended and the food supplied threatened, there had as yet been no bloodshed.

Many of his hearers, no doubt remembered the horrible out-rages that accompanied the strikes 30 years ago. On June 9th M. Blum, tabled the first five of his promised bills. They proposed (1) to establish a 40 hour working week without reduction of wages; (2) to establish an anuual fifteen day's holiday on full pay in commerce and industry with provision for the later extension of the measure to the liberal professions and to agriculture and domestic service; (3) to provide for the conclusion of collective labour contracts in industry; the government reserving the right to institute negotiation between employers and employees when necessary, and if they failed to

agree to make a settlement by arbitration. (the provisions of this bill were to be made applicable to industries which had not yet been represented in the recent negotiation). (4) to repeal the Decrees by which civil servants were deprived of certain allowances last year and those which delayed their promotion, the Government reserving the right to raise the minimum salary rates for civil servants about the minimum ; (5) to restore the exemption to Ex-soldiers pensions from income tax pending creation of a general pension fund before the end of the year.

Britain, Italy and the League.

The Negus of Abyssinia arrived in London on June 3rd. A forlorn figure, he was greeted not only with general courtesy, but with a large measure of general sympathy. He had in one sense been the victim of the unfortunate covenant of the "League of Nations unfortunate - because it lacked the necessary sanction of Universal application.

It soon became clear that the Negus was hardly likely to stay long in this country. His advisers were driven to the conclusion that he could not prolong his stay without raising a question of some embarrassment. When he came to London he did so on the distinct understanding that he should come incognito.' The condition was thus expressed by Mr. Baldwin in the "House of Commons:" He (Negus) has renounced the direction of affairs and it is reasonable in the circumstances that he should be expected not to participate in any way in the furtherance of hostilities. Now it was soon made known that the Negus though he had renounced the direction of affairs had not renounced his former title to sovereignty in Abyssinia. If therefore his stay in London were to be prolonged it might be necessary for him to abandon the status of incognito and to claim recognition from the British Government as Emperor of Abyssinia.

Meanwhile a great change was diagnosible in the relationship between the British and Italian Governments and therefore in the prospect of profitable business being done when the Assembly council met at Geneva. The Argentine Government had proposed that the general question of sanctions in the light of the Abyssinian experience be submitted to the Assembly. It was therefore decided that the Assembly should meet on June 30th and that the council should sit at the same time. It was announced on June 6th that Sir. Samuel Hoare had been appointed first Lord of the Admiralty in succession to Lord Monsell. Sir Samuel's return to office started a wave of Italian popular enthusiasm for the recapture of British friendship. Signor Grandi in London, and Sir Eric Drummond in Rome, had already embarked on the informal stage of exploring avenues to an understanding. Signor Grandi paid a second visit to Mr. Eden at the foreign office on June 3rd.

The urgent question was the removal of sanctions. Although it was a matter of elementary diplomatic form that negotiations for a settlement of questions raised by the Italian conquest of Abysinia could not be pursued unless the technical state of war connoted by the operation of sanctions —and, indeed specifically established by the wording of the covenant—be first brought to an end, it was recognised in Rome, that the technique of calling off Sanctions presented some novel problems. The covenant is not only a vaguely worded document, but has never been before put into operation. The contingency of sanctions being prolonged, beyond the end of a given war is not even mentioned in it, and there are international jurists who claim that sanctions in present circumstances, are not only an absurdity but an illegality.

But the "fifty-odd, states were all involved, and fifty odd national faces had to be saved. Hence it was that the

Argentine proposal for transferring question from the council to the Assembly was almost universally welcomed. It would be possible for the Assembly to take an initiative, such as the Council could not take for calling off sanctions as the first step towards a general revision of the covenant itself. Although the British Government was committed to the general policy of revising the covenant, it was in no obvious hurry to construe that policy in any specific detail. Indeed it is coming to be more generally acknowledged that the problem of reforming the League is one that will have to be approached on a wider basis than that of the League's present membership, and that the work is likely to be spread over a long period. Before it can be seriously begun, it will be necessary to receive the German answer to the British questionaire, one point in which was concerned precisely with the reform of the League.

On the same day that the Negus arrived in England Marshal Badoglio arrived ceremonially in Rome. The coincidence of those two events caused some embarrassment in British Official quarters. It seemed to emphasise the association of Great Britain with Abyssinia's cause in the recent war. British politicians have never tried of protesting, that the issue with Italy over the war in Abyssinia was not a British, but a League of Nation's Issue. The real difficulty created by the presence of the Emperor and his family in London was that if fanned public emotion over what had taken place in Abyssinia at a moment when the British Government was necessarily considering what changes could be proposed in the covenant of the "League of Nations" to ensure the future continuance, of the League itself. It is taken as an obvious premise by official thought in London that the League in its present state has failed in its main object. Its main object is clearly to prevent war.

The resultant question to be faced is: how can the League of Nations be preserved? To answer that question one must go back to the original discussion about the framing of the covenant that took place in 1919. Then as now we have to decide whether the League of Nations is worthwhile as a purely moral instrument. Unless the League be a super-state, that is unless it be composed of every government on earth and unless every government on Earth surrenders to Geneva its sovereign right to make war, then sanctions are an impossible thing. Within the frontiers of a given country the policy of sanctions against crime is a possibility because it can be universally applied in that country, and because the individual subjects themselves are not allowed to be armed.

The League of Nations capable of enforcing peace would be possible, therefore only if the constituent countries entirely surrendered their national armaments and if it were universal in its jurisdiction. Is that a reasonable thing to hope for in the world as we know it? If not, what alternative form of League of Nations is possible? Many people in Great Britain are beginning to wonder if it would not be best to regard the League of Nations simply as a League, or a society or a Club of pacific Nations. Article 16, would in such a case have to be eleminated from the covenant. The Club members would undertake never to go to war. In so far as a member violated that pledge he would automatically cease to be a member.

If such a League of Nations has been in existence last year, what would have happened, would have been that Italy would have ceased to be a member of the League of Nations. Abyssinia would have known that she could hope for no help from Geneva. She would therefore, no doubt, have come to terms at once, and central Amhara at any rate might have been saved for the Negus. It is arguable that

Abyssinia would not have suffered so much if the League of Nations had not attempted to impose sanctions on Italy.

The lines, therefore, on which certain sections of British thought seem to be moving is in the direction of eliminating sanctions from the machinery of the League ef Nations and of making it into an instrument of exclusively moral or psychological value until such time as the world may be ready for the establishment of a Super-state. That looks a long time ahead.

Mr. Anthony Eden in a speech he made on June 6th said that "the League of Nations had suffered a set-back, and whenever respect for Law and order was weakened at once a number of new anxieties arose to confuse the present and to perplex the future. That was as true of international as of national affairs. The very fact that the League found its authority weakened placed an obligation on all its members to examine recent events and to attempt to remedy in a spirit of candid realism, the defects which those events had laid bare."

Mr. Neville Chamberlain, in a public speech he made on June 10th, went even further. He said "it is no use for us to shut out eyes to the reality. The fact remains that the policy of the collective security based on Sanctions has been tried out and has failed. It failed to prevent war, it failed to stop war, failed to save the victim to the aggression. If we have retained any vestige of common sense, surely we must admit that we have tried to impose upon the League a task which was beyond its powers. Surely it is time that the Nations who compose the League would review the situation and should decide so to limit the functions of the League in future that they may accord with its real powers. It is not apparent that the policy of sanctions involves—I do not say war, but a risk of war. It is not apparent that that risk must increase in proportion to the effectiveness of sanctions. It is not also apparent from what has happened that in the presence of such a risk, Nations cannot be relied upon to proceed to the extremity of war unless in fact their vital interests are threatened. If that be so, does it not suggest that it might be wise to explore the possibility of localising the danger spots of the world and so trying to find a practical method of ensuring peace by means of regional arrangements which could be approved by the League, but which should be guaranteed by those Nations whose interests were vitally connected with those danger spots."

Mr Chamberlain therein indicated the lines on which at least some members of his Majesty's Government were exploring a remodelling of the League. But no sooner had he spoken then a new commotion broke loose; reminiscent in a mild degree of what took place last December. Had the British Government decided to advocate at Geneva the lifting of sanctions? If so would Mr. Eden accept that decision or would he resign? Such questions were discussed among the Pundits.

It was clearly not the case that before Mr. Chamberlain spoke the Government had reached any formal decision on this matter, nor even that an informal understanding had been reached. A report was published in a London Newspaper on June. 13th to the effect that a "secret Note" had been sent by the British to the French Government a week before to intimate that it was now a principle of British Policy to call off sanctions? That report was promptly described in British official quarters as "wholly untrue" nor was there any difficulty in believing that denial. It was well known fact that certain members of the Cabinet still stubbornly opposed the policy of lifting sanctions or of amending the covenant of the League in the sense

indicated by Mr. Chamberlain on June 10th.

At the time when this paper had to be written the outcome of the British Government's deliberations on the subject were unknown. Nor had there emerged any indication of the policies that would be advocated at Geneva when the Assembly met at the end of month. It is true that the Chilean Government had presented a memorandum, dated May. 18th both to the United state's Government and to the State's members of the League of Nations, making certain proposals but it was not clear what the proposals in practice would amount to. This main sense seemed to be that the cardinal obstacle constituted by Art. 16 of the Covenant should be obviated by a provision that the "Sole Sanction" to be employed in the future against an aggressor should be "The Suspension of Deplomatic Relations."

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The Anunal Report and Account of the Directors for yearending 1935 as also the Valuation Report of the Company's Actuary for the triennium ending 31st December 1935, were adopted.

A dividend of 6% and a Silver Jubilee bonus of 4% making 10% in all, was declared to the shareholders, while a bonus of Rs. 15 and Rs. 20 p. a. on endowment and whole life policies respectively was declared to the policyholders.

While moving the adoption of the Annual Report, Revenue Account and the Balance Sheet, Mr. Jamndas M. Mehta, the Chairman of the Company said:—

I have great pleasure in moving the adoption of the Annual Report, Revenue Account and Balance Sheet for the year ending 31st December 1935. From the Directors' Report you will have no doubt noticed the progressive advance the Company has made year after year, especially during the year 1935 the progress made in all directions is greater than ever and our position is daily becoming more satisfactory. The Policies in force number 15,760 amounting to Rs. 2,52,08,418- as against 8,974 and Rs. 1,48,40,801- respectively in 1932. Since 1925 we have made progress of nearly *400% in ten years time*. All the other figures go to confirm the same conclusion. You will find that our Life Fund has increased from Rs. 34,02,332 in 1934 to Rs. 42,98,820- at the end of 1935. This coupled with other sources makes our total assets nearly half a crore as against our actuarial liability of Rs. 252,08,418- to our policyholders. In short our present assets in cash nearly work out at one-fifth of our potential liability, a position which I consider to be throughly sound. We propose to give you 6% dividend which you will notice from the Actuarial Valuation Report is in addition to the 4% Silver Jubilee Bonus the Directors propose to pay to you. We can rightly be proud of the results revealed by the Balance Sheet and the Valuation Report. This is the year of the Silver jubilee of our Company and I think we have reason to be gratified at the soundness of our position and the hopefulness for the future.

Mr. C. G. Fozdar, General Manager in seconding the resolution said that he endorsed the observations made by the Chairman. He said that the Indian Insurance Companies were having a healthy progress. on the whole; the volume of business year after year was increasing; Insurance was slowly but steadily getting popular among the people. He also referred to the cut throat competition of the foreign companies possessed of immense resources.

Possessed of vast funds some of these companies have dug themselves deeply in this country for many many years and it is possible for them to enter into an unequal competition even with sound Indian concerns. Everyday the danger is growing more

and more. The policyholders of these companies in India have little knowledge of and less control over the real position and their savings might be jeopardised by some untoward incident outside India. This possibility is not at all remote. In these days of economic nationalism coupled with the shrinkage international trade and Exchange barriers and restrictions and finally with the ever growing complications of foreign political relations of different countries, a world war is by no means a groundless apprehension in the near future. In such an eventuality, the Indian policyholders of foreign firms may be irretrievably ruined and the least the Government of India can do is to compel these companies to disclose not merely their volume of business in this country but also the investments they hold in Indian securities and to legislate that these investments shall be fully commensurate with their commitments.

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BOOK REVIEW

THE BRITON IN INDIA

By Prof. T. J. George.

This is a book which Prof. George has taken great pains to bring out. It mainly deals with the racial relations of both the Briton and the Indian and as the author claims "this is the first systematic attempt that has been made by any writer Indian, or English on the problem of racial relations." The author's main object in bringing out this book is to draw the immediate attention of the English people to "the unfair and irritating nature of the racial situation at present, and to appeal to them to revise their views and opinions on the whole problem." We do not know how far Mr. George will succeed in his endeavour. But there can be no doubt as to the pains he has taken in elaborating the theme of mutual co-operation and toleration in the interest of both. Throughout the pages of the book, he pleads for racial equality giving up for once the idea of the Briton as the *Governor* and the Indian as the *governed*. We need not say that this is something like asking for the moon. The racial superiority of the Briton is essentially based on his political supremacy over Indian and to him the Indian is a black slave. It is the imperialistic arrogance that is mainly responsible for the presumption of superiority and the average life of the Briton in India is based on power and affluence.

The book begins with the tracing of the English connection with India in the seventeen and early part of the eighteenth centuary and goes down to this day. Mr. George is very liberal in his quotations and he has devoted many pages on the rule of the East India Company, the influence of the Missionaries and the Mutiny. In the concluding chapter of the book Mr. George writes, "Two main considerations have influenced my method of approach and treatmant of the racial problem. For one thing, mere flattery and injudicious and indiscriminate praise is not the best thing for an individual or a community or a nation. It would be very pleasant, no doubt, to hear oneself praised and flattered. There would be a good many people who are prepared to do that, and who are still doing it. The English historians, writers and politicians have been busy showing what they think about India and the Indians. It will not be a bad thing for some of the English people to be told as to what some of the Indians are thinking of them".

The author has remarkably succeeded in this, namely to bring forth the manifest injustices done by the Briton to Indian on the basis of racial superiority. The book is a thought provoking one and though the book is mainly intended to the Englishman, every educated Indian also will find it highly useful.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

The Spanish Civil War.

When the elections were successfully conducted and a majority was obtained by the Left-wing, the Communists and Social revolutionaries, syndicalists and others were very much jubilant and all of them co-operated to establish a Left-wing Government in Spain. This was at once challenged by all the reactionary forces and the symptoms of counter-revolutionary uprising were first visible in Morocco. General Franco, the arch-reactionary militarist dictator sounded the tocsin of revolt and organised resistance to the established Government. He challenged the authority of the Left-wing Government and declared war against it. The rebels were able to capture some ports and towns and the civil war is raging fiercely for the last three weeks.

In this civil war, against decency and decorum, the blood thirsty immoral Mussolini's hidden hand is clearly visible. Italian arms and ammunitions are very largely supplied to the rebel forces and Hitler has followed suit by sending war-ships to assist the Spanish Brigands. In all probability Hitler and Mussolini, the two inveterate enemies of Socialism and the active brokers of capitalism are behind this whole affair, and if France and Russia do not immediately come to the aid of the Spanish Government, its position will become worse. The remarkable way in which the Red-Storm-troops and the red-shock, Brigades have repulsed the attacks of the rebels calls forth highest praise from all quarters.

The issue and future of socialism will be decided by the Spanish civil war. Whether reaction will triumph or the objective of socialism through organised mass effort will succeed, remains on the result of the civil war. We have no doubt that with the power of the masses behind the Spanish Govt. the socialists will crush the rebels in no time and establish peace and prosperity and the authority of the masses over the classes.

The City Municipal Election.

There is a good deal of discontent among the Congress men in the city regarding the selection of candidates for the city Municipal election by the Ad-hoc Committee. There are in all 40 general seats to be contested and the Ad-hoc committee has chosen 40 candidates for all these seats. It is interesting to note that barring a few well-known to the public, the majority of the candidates selected by the Ad-hoc committee are either non-entities or whose antecedents are highly quetionable as genuine Congress men. The Ad-hoc committee in certain cases had even not cared for the resolution passed at the Karaikudy Conference, regarding the selection of candidates. People who were anti-congress till lately, and working against the country were chosen by the committee as the candidates for the city municipal election, while the claims of Congressmen with many years of service and sacrifice to their credit have been unpardonably neglected by the Adhoc committee. The Congress of late is being dominated by reactionary and compromising forces who have not hesitated to stoop to any method for compromising the position of the Congress. The scandalous way in which this selection has been made deserves censure at the hands of impartial critics. Already the discontent is manifest and public meetings are held to protest against the way in which the adhoc committee has done its work. While we do not approve of persons with personal motives to carry on agitation against the Congress, we certainly welcome the idea of Congressmen organising protest against the

conduct of the *Ad-hoc* committee in the matter of selection of candidates basing their selection principle. We are also surprised to find that the Congress has thrown to the winds, the claims of the minority parties within the Congress who were not given any chance to represent their views for the general good. The choice of candidates for the city Municipal election is an indication of what the Congress bureaucracy will do, in the matter of general interest and the election to other Legislative bodies. We hope that the Adhoc committee will call a conference, of all tried workers in in the city and take their views and revise the selection.

Pondicherry Textile Strike.

The outrage committed by the Pondicherry Government in shooting down the workers in Savana Mills at Pondicherry calls forth a vehement condemnation at the hands of the public. The stay-in-strike conducted by the textile workers of Pondicherry was closely on the model of the French workers' strike in France, when Leon Blum assumed the responsibilities of the Government. It was remarkable to note that the strike was orderly and peaceful and the workers accepted redress of their grievances through such means, while the authorities in Pondicherry on the plea of preserving law and order engaged Machine guns to shoot down the workers. This conduct of the colonial French-Government in Pondicherry is in ill-keeping with the policy and programme for which the French Government exists. The popular front Government of France is essentially of radicals and socialists whose main concern is to protect the interests of the masses, the workers and peasants. Therefore one cannot expect the authorities to behave in a way which was not only prejudicial to the interests of the workers but also involved the lives of 100 of them. The French Government should forthwith set up an enquiry into the conduct of the French officials in Pondicherry and give redress to the suffering families of the deseased workers, and also redress the grievances of the textile labourers of Pondicherry. We hope that the French Government will bring to book those who are responsible for the shooting outrage at Pondicherry.

Congress House and Congress Socialists.

The Madras Congress socialist party applied for permission to use the congress house during the time of Mr. Achut Patwardhan's visit to the City. Mr. Achut Patwardhan is a great public worker and a convincing speaker. Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru chose him as one of the Congress-working committee members from the congress socialist group. In the nature of things, one would expect that Mr. Patwardhan being a responsible officer of the congress would be given all facilities during his stay at Madras by the congress officials. But much to the surprise of the public, even the use of congress house was denied to Mr. Patwardhan for addressing a public Meeting. This action on the part of the congress officials in Tamil Nad provoked much criticism and even orthodox congress men were disgusted with the conduct of the congress officials. Subsequently the vice-president and the secretary issued statements regretting the mistake and the congress house was given to the congress socialist party for some other meetings.

The Tamil Nadu Congress President, Mr. S. Satyamurthy in this connection issued a statement to the press which should not go unchallenged by all genuine congressmen. He says that antioffice acceptance campaign conducted by a section of the congressmen is anti-congress activity and as such the congress house should not be given for such propaganda. He also says that Mr. Patwardhan during the time of his visit to the city was not a guest of the Tamil Nadu Congress committee. Does this mean that if the T. N. C. C.

does not invite congress leaders to the city, they have no right to come here and if they come against the wishes of the T. N. C. C., the congress house should be denied to them.? The Congress or the Congress House is not the property of Mr. Satyamurthy or any one else and however much he may wish to check the progressive forces in the Congress carrying on work in his *domain*, this reactionary jingo will not be cared even for a farthing and the forward forces will march on in spite of him. By such petty acts of meanness, Mr. Satyamurthy and Company, will only pave the way for their own fall and the public will become disgusted of their conduct. We hope that the bureaucracy of the congress will not out-do the bureaucarcy of the Government and if it does, the public has to fight both together and assert their rights. The conduct of the congress officials is only a sad reflection of what they are capable of doing to their opponents when they are in power.

The Trichy Municipal Chairman Election.

After the Vellore episode, a fresh rift in the lute has been brought to the notice of the public in the Trichy Municipal Chairman's election affair. The Congress councillors being unable to agree to set up a single candidate and back him up, had to chose between two Congress nominees for the post of the chairman. The Tamil Nad Congress working Committee decided to back up Mr. Thevar, while the majority of councillors in the Trichy Municipality decided to back up Mr. Ponniah Pillai. This contradictory conduct of the congressmen itself shows that the high command of the Congress ignored the wishes of the local Congressmen and the majority of the Councillors decided to flout the decision of the Congress high command. A breach of discipline has happened and for good or for bad Dr. Rajan's wishes have prevailed. This virtually amounts to a vote of censure of the Congress high command in the Tamil Nad by Trichy congressmen and if the T. N. C. working committee is incapable of facing facts it would do good to the province if it abdicates. There is no use of talking about discipline when the party leaders themselves are oblivious and impervious to the request and demands of the rank and file. If this state of affair prevails in the congress circles, there is every likelihood of the party disintegrating and meeting with the same fate as the arch-reactionary justice party has met with. The Congress should command the loyalty of unselfish people whose primary duty will be to serve the country and the congress and not to seek petty personal advantages and positions which lead to corruption and disorder.

In this connection we may point out that the T. N. C. working committee has issued a statement denouncing the conduct of certain local congress men for having set up agitation against the Ad-hoc committee, regarding the choice of candidates for the corporation election. The statement refers to this agitation as the work of certain discontented indisciplined congressmen and calls upon them to cease all activities calculated to break the discipline of the congress. One wonders what the T. N. C. working committee has to say to the Trichy affair and how it proposes to deal with the big guns!

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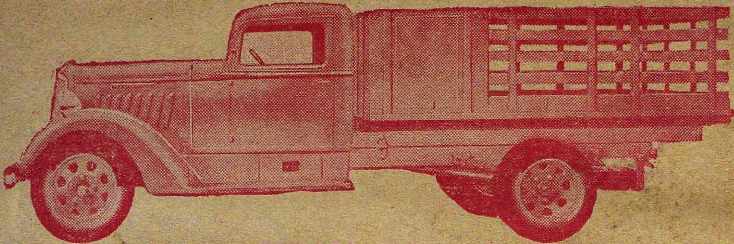

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